Another great Walt Harned slide show on LOADSTAR #144!

LOADSTAR® LETTER

May 1996 Volume , Issue 34

Jeff's Official Email Address

Please direct all Email for LOADSTAR to *Jeff@Loadstar.com* for question, comments and chat and I will get back to you. Please no unsolicited electronic submissions! It may seem ironic that LOADSTAR doesn't accept submissions electronically, but we must receive a physical disk with a *signed* letter that states you have the right to sell us your program. Try running LOADSTAR Briefs, published on every issue, and filling out the submission form electronically. A printer is required. Or visit our web page at *http://www.loadstar.com/* for more info.

LOADSTAR's Web Page

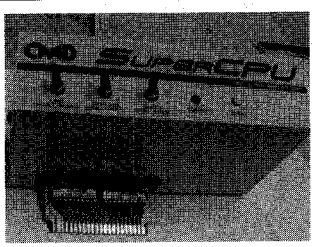
http://www.loadstar.com/ is soon going to be the coolest C-64 site on earth. It's still under construction, but give it a visit. There may be something there you want to download -- like for instance our sampler of the Compleat Programmer. Daniel Tobias, who never passes up a chance to berate the Commodore 8-bit line of machines, is making all changes for now. Email Dan at *Dan@Softdisk.Com* and let him know how terrible it is to berate the Commodore.

LOADSTAR Letter Goes Subscription

It may seem like a cold corporate move, but The LOADSTAR Letter has become too much of a liability for a small company to publish out of love. Rather than simply allowing it to fade away, the LOADSTAR Letter will grow, but for LOADSTAR Letter charter subscribers at $12 per year. Jeff Jones will join forces with Scott Eggleston and others for a more well-rounded hard-hitting magazine. Issue #36 will mark the final free issue that we publish. From then on, it will be mailed only to LOADSTAR Letter Subscribers. See the LOADSTAR LETTER ad on page 6 for more information.

Copyright 1996 by J & F Publishing, Inc. LOADSTAR is a monthly "magazine on disk" for the Commodore 64/128. Subscribers receive two 1541 disks (or one 1581 disk) in their mailbox every month filled with news, articles and programs. These are nonPD, high quality programs. Subscription prices are $69.95 for a 12month subscription or $19.95 for a 3month subscription. You may also elect to subscribe "by the month", where we charge your credit card $7.95 for each issue after it's shipped. The Loadstar Letter is published monthly by J & F Publishing as a companion to LOADSTAR and LOADSTAR 128 Quarterly. No part of this newsletter may be reproduced without the permission of J & F Publishing. LOADSTAR LETTER contacts any **ONE** of the following: LOADSTAR@SOFTDISK.COM, Jeff@LOADSTAR.COM, Jeff@Softdisk.com, LOADSTAR@LOADSTAR.com. US MAIL: ATTN Jeff Jones, J & F Publishing P.O. Box 30008, Shreveport, LA 71130-0008 318/221-8718. Fax 318/221-8870. BBS 318/425-4382. Leave feedback or e-mail "Jeff Jones" 2400/8n1 N.I.S.S.A. Network

CMD Super CPU Report!



The CMD Super CPU arrived at LOADSTAR in a big box filled with the kind of popcorn that we all love and the environmentalists hate. Does the blasted thing work? In a word, yes. Is it fast? In two words, "*really* fast!" Not just some programs, but *all* programs. Of course some activities, serial port access for one, temporarily slow down acceleration, but basically no activity short of a full fledged lockup will operate slower. SID Player runs fine, and at *normal* speed. The buzz in *EDSTAR II*, which is controlled by a BASIC FOR loop, is way to fast too hear -- not even a *click*. BASIC joystick routines ran too fast, again because such loops are software dependent and not interrupt dependent. You'll find a normal keyboard response, even from repeating keys because the keyboard is still being scanned only 60 times per second despite the system speed increase. So cursoring around will seem normal (though some scrolling and paging such as a BASIC LIST can be way too fast). Wow! Am I complaining about speed?

Even though it's only a beta unit, it's more useful to me than our *Schnedler TurboMaster* 4MHZ accelerator, which we've owned for a while now. I expected as much from CMD. Not only was it more compatible with LOADSTAR software, it was more compatible with hardware. It allowed me to plug in my REU which was downright impossible with the TurboMaster. More than that, if a game or a demo *does* run

Continued on page 3

Driven Rides On LOADSTAR see Page 2 Program Style: see Page 3
X96 Graphics Winners: see Page 2 Gaelyne Moranec: see Page 4

YOU MAY BE AN ENGINEER

...If you introduce your wife as "mylady@home.wife"
...If your spouse sends you an e-mail instead of calling you to dinner
...If you want an 8X CDROM for Christmas
...If you stare at an orange juice container because it says CONCENTRATE
...If you can name 6 Star Trek episodes
...If the only jokes you receive are through e-mail
...If your wrist watch has more computing power than a 486DX-50
...If your idea of good interpersonal communication means getting the decimal point in the right place
...If you look forward to Christmas only to put together the kids' toys
...If you use a CAD package to design your son's Pine Wood Derby car
...If you have used coat hangers and duct tape for something other than hanging coats and taping ducts
...If, at Christmas, it goes without saying that you will be the one to find the burnt-out bulb in the string
...If you window shop at Radio Shack
...If your ideal evening consists of fast-forwarding through the latest sci-fi movie looking for technical inaccuracies
...If you have "Dilbert" comics displayed anywhere in your work area
...If you carry on a one-hour debate over the expected results of a test that actually takes five minutes to run
...If you are convinced you can build a phazer out of your garage door opener and your camera's flash attachment
...If you don't even know where the cover to your personal computer is
...If you have modified your can-opener to be microprocessor driven
...If you know the direction the water swirls when you flush
...If you own "Official Star Trek" anything
...If you have ever taken the back off your TV just to see what's inside
...If you ever burned down the gymnasium with your Science Fair project
...If you are currently gathering the components to build your own nuclear reactor
...If you own one or more white short-sleeve dress shirts
...If you have never backed-up your hard drive
...If you are aware that computers are actually only good for playing games, but are afraid to say it out loud
...If you truly believe aliens are living among us
...If you have ever saved the power cord from a broken appliance
...If you have ever purchased an electronic appliance "as-is"
...If you see a good design and still have to change it
...If the salespeople at Circuit City can't answer any of your

By Elwix. Driven will be distributed on LOADSTAR 3.5-inch disks (No room on the 1541 version). Driven started in August of 1994, with the goal to provide some coverage and drive to the NTSC demo scene. The best times in the NTSC demo scene have always been coupled with great disk magazines that covered the news, groups, demos, etc. about the scene. There hadn't been a really good diskmag for a couple years, and the scene was on a real slide downward (much fewer demos made, fewer groups, etc.). Fortunately Internet has really breathed new life in our little artisan subculture.

Each issue of Driven covers news about groups and people active in the scene, reviews of recent demos, opinion articles with commentary about various aspects of scene life, interviews with demo makers themselves, and usually there's a commercial-oriented article (magazine, software, or hardware review or report) as well as an article regarding the Internet as it relates to the c64. Driven is, by the way, freely spread to Internet. The more it is given out, the happier we are.

We think Driven has also played some role in motivating people and getting the ever-active PAL demo scene to also recognize North America as a valid section of the worldwide C64 subculture. It's working better than we expected because not only have we gotten recognition overseas in the "underground" but we've gotten growing recognition right here in the more mainstream magazines and online services. The demo scene here is growing again, more demos are getting released, quality is on the rise, and even old sceners from the past have rediscovered the still alive demo world and decided this hobby was worth taking up again!

Demos are a truely unique form of artistic expression. The C-64 was the start of the demo-as-art form and the Amiga and PC have picked up the demo mania as well - but C-64 was the motherland, and still active today. Get involved! A lot of tutorial info exists to help you start making demos yourself, or at the minimum keep reading Driven, watching and spreading the demos, and providing your feedback to demo artists.

The Underground

The 8-bit Commodore Mini-mag

The Underground is a bi-monthly publication with articles featuring reviews, PD/Shareware, BASIC tutorials, Geos, telecommunications, international stuff, news and tips. The Underground is a publication created by people who refuse to let their 8-bit computers gather dust, and it's priced low enough for even the most frugal users. Try a sample issue and see if The Underground is worth your while. You'll be glad you did.

Single Issue: $2.00
Canada/Mexico$2.25
International $3.75

One year (six issues) $13.00
Canada/Mexico $15.75
International $22.25

Send check or money order (US funds) to:

The Underground
4574 Via Santa Maria
Santa Maria, CA 93455
USA

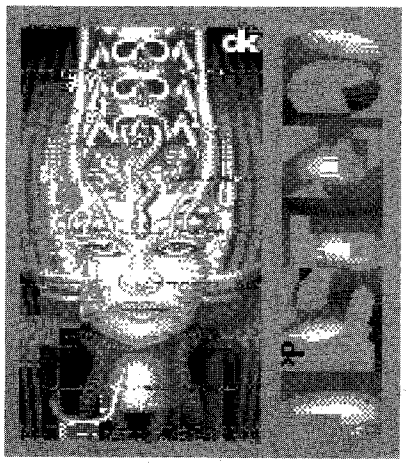
C-64 Graphics Winners!

By Elwix of Style. These graphics were entries in X96, a multi-platform demo competition held in Utrecht, Holland in April. Web address:

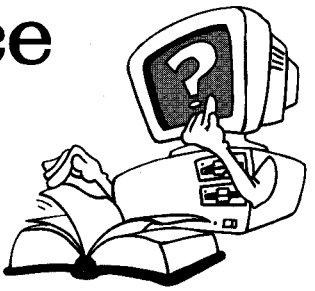
http://www.xs4all.nl/~herkel/index.htm

The winning picture is a brand new graphics format called "super hires IFLI"; created by Crossbow/Crest. The 2nd and 3rd place pictures are IFLI pictures. Both formats do some real code trickery to get the effect of extra resolution and color, and needed be NTSC fixed, which is what we in Style did.

Note from Jeff: One very good semi-animation was a bit racy for LOADSTAR's tastes, and since we're spineless editors who want to keep every subscriber, we'll exercise our right to edit. We Americans tend to cancel our subscriptions when we see in print the things we talk about and do in private. So allow me to flex my censorship muscles.



The User Interface

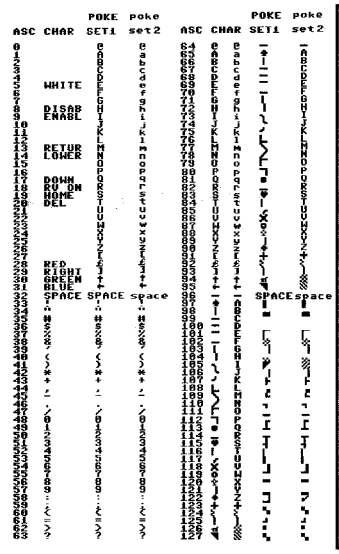


No matter how you slice it, your program manipulates text and graphics in a way that either processes or presents information for the user. Usually your medium is the screen. No matter how spectacular your algorithms are, a good *user interface* is essential to a successful program.

A user interface is simply the place where a user and the program connect. That will almost always be a screen. If you're going to interface with a program, it helps for the screen to be simple but elegant. Menus are simple, but show the user all the *important* options. Note that *important* is the operative word here. Your program may do 50 things, but if you cram those 50 things onto the screen, the user will likely be daunted. Remember, your program is supposed to be easy to use. Maybe it is, but it must be understood before it is used. So your opening menu should be 70% space and 30% text. Devote some of that space on the screen to aesthetics, but not *busy* stuff that make the screen hard to read.

Why is it hard to find the food you want in McDonalds? The menu has everything crammed in one area. Why do people rave about GEOS, Windows 95 and MAC operating systems? Because they made menus simple and predictable. Whether your program uses a mouse or not, you must create a *simple predictable path* from the few big commands on the main menu to the many little options that make your program great. In order to do this, you must *categorize your menus* in a way that *leads* your user to the feature they want.

Your menus are a presentation of the features in your program There's nothing wrong with hot keys allowing instant access, but there should also be that visual, textual path that leads your user by the hand to their desired goal.

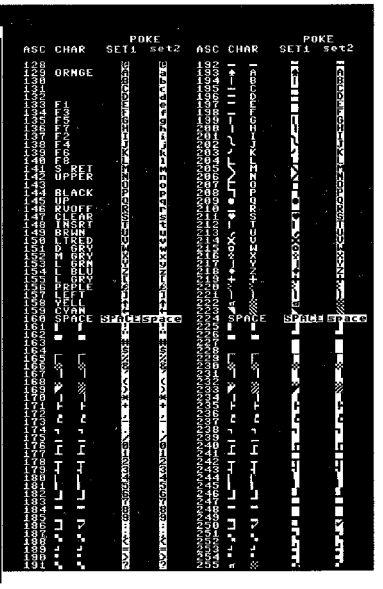


SCREEN CODE CHART

Characters can be printed to the screen as well as poked. LOADSTAR discourages poking to the screen unnecessarily, but it can be useful or even essential. The codes to the left and right are PETASCII and SCREEN CODE values. The PETASCII values can be printed with CHR$(nn) values. The label set 1 and set 2 denote how the characters look on screen with the two built in fonts.

The SCREEN CODES are poked to the screen. Home is normally location 1024. POKE 1024,1 will place an a in the HOME position. POKE 2023,2 will place a b in the bottom right hand corner of the screen.

Note that you can POKE a character in on any right hand column without causing a scroll, but in BASIC it's slower and tedious to do excessive poking. To the screen. It also makes your program more difficult to understand if you poke text to the screen because you list the program and can't find keywords that let you know where to stop.



ACELERATOR CONTINUED

too fast to be useful, you can press the turbo switch and switch between speeds on the fly without causing a crash or a reset. Most important, the *screen* is rock solid. TurboMaster had so much noise in its interface that screens quickly became unreadable -- especially on 128s in 64 mode. Our BBS program could not connect at all with other computers though it ran great on its own. The timing loops must have been based on software, not hardware timers. This is the reason CMD sent us the unit -- to test it with a variety of software so that we could make comments for last minute changes. Units will probably Be on the streets by the time you're reading this.

Since ARC does more thinking than reading and printing to the screen, it ends up being *flying* faster than our own WRAPTOR, which slows itself down with screen updates and constant disk access -- still WRAPTOR worked *faster*. Oddly enough, I could crunch programs with BIT imploder much faster, but its programs wouldn't run under the accelerator. Could be illegal opcodes in the explode software. They won't run under TurboMaster either.

Some CMD magick which prevents the turbo from operating below 4MHZ, even when drive access is slowing down the unit. So basically, at its slowest, the Super CPU is about as fast as the TurboMaster at its fastest. At the moment, the unit isn't compatible with RAMLink or GEOS, but I'm *very* interested to see how fast parallel HD access and RAMlink access will be. The unit gets an A from me -- and A+ when the final version works with RAMLink and GEOS.

questions
...If you still own a slide rule and you know how to work it
...If the thought that a CD could refer to finance or music never enters your mind
...If you own a set of itty-bitty screw drivers, but you don't remember where they are
...If you rotate your screen savers more frequently than your automobile tires
...If you have a functioning home copier machine, but every toaster you own turns bread into charcoal
...If you have more toys than your kids
...If you need a checklist to turn on the TV
...If you have introduced your kids by the wrong name
...If you have a habit of destroying things in order to see how they work
...If your I.Q. number is bigger than your weight
...If the microphone or visual aids at a meeting don't work and you rush up to the front to fix it
...If you can remember 7 computer passwords but not your anniversary
...If you have memorized the program schedule for the Discovery channel and have seen most of the shows already
...If you have ever owned a calculator with no equal key and know what RPN stands for
...If your father sat 2 inches in front of your family's first color TV with a magnifying lens to see how they made the colors, and you grew up thinking that was normal
...If you know how to take the cover off of your computer, and what size screw driver to use
...If you can type 70 words a minute but can't read your own handwriting
...If your wristwatch has more buttons than a telephone
...If you have more friends on the Internet than in real life
...If you thought the real heroes of "Apollo 13" were the mission controllers
...If you think that when people around you yawn, it's because they didn't get enough sleep
...If you spend more on your home computer than your car
...If you know what http:// stands for
...If you've ever tried to repair a $5.00 radio
...If you have a neatly sorted collection of old bolts and nuts in your garage.
...If your three year old son asks why the sky is blue and you try to explain atmospheric absorption theory
...If your lap-top computer costs more than your car
...If your 4 basic food groups are:
1. Caffeine
2. Fat
3. Sugar
4. Chocolate

Forwarded From Dean Esmay, esmay@syndicomm.com

From the Canonical List Of Computer Hardware Humor Copyright Lee Campbell Circulate this for Yuks, but not for Bucks!

10/92 Intel unveils i486 follow-on; announces name will be "Pentium" because "586" is not copyrightable.

04/93 Pentium begins sampling. The usual obscure bugs appear. This time persistent ones are associated with opcode X666.

09/93 Intel announces low-power, reduced performance version of Pentium for use in portables. Ad campaign features engineers backpacking with portable computers, forming token ring around campfire. Naturally, the chip is named "Tentium."

11/93 Marketeers around the world are stunned by Intel's bold new marketing strategy: leasing of microprocessors. Customers will be able to lease chips with option to buy or to upgrade to the next generation which is guaranteed to be pin compatible (The chips have a special pinout with dozens of pins reserved for future use.) The chip is dubbed "Rentium."

03/94 An uneasy alliance of the Vatican and fundamentalist Christians demands a CPU with no opcodes numbered 666 in octal, decimal or hexadecimal. Intel listens to its customers and responds with a special compiler with workarounds, and a chip that gives up about 10% in performance but eschews "devil" opcodes. The part is called "Lentium".

05/94 AMD announces a super-low-cost Pentium compatible. It costs "Just pennies per MIP" and is dubbed "Centium."

06/94 Intel releases name of next generation chip. A small company in Mocatello, Idaho has had the foresight to copyright and market chips under the name "Hexium" and "Sexium." They try to sell the names to Intel for millions. Intel doggedly resists the blackmail and markets the new chip as "Sixium."

11/94 Sixium samples. Bugs show up again in opcode 666. The press derisively refers to the buggy chips as "Nixium."

04/95 The bugs in opcode 666 are finally killed. Grateful OEM's sell the part as "Fixium."

05/95 Texas Instruments announces it has obtained rights to second-source Sixium. In an effort to differentiate its product and tap the wellsprings of state pride, it names its new chip "Texium."

07/95 Cyrix announces a "super-compatability" chip which can emulate a pentium, a superSPARC, an R3000, a PowerPC, an Alpha, and BASIC - Language that's unsuitable without additions.

09/95 A lively aftermarket develops in used Pentium chips; they are bought and sold under the moniker "Spentium."

Getting To Know Your Computer

ALT KEY - For calling up extra functions. Conveniently placed where you'd expect to find the SHIFT key, it let's you delete en-

http://hal9000.net.au/~moranec Gaelyne's Homepage

Gaelyne says: "Get a modem. Get Connected. Seriously, a Commodore with a printer, modem and good terminal program is a complete computer system. There's nothing like the ability to reach out and meet people from the privacy of home (wherever that home may be). It's such a tremendous thing to have the ability to make contact with others. With a modem, you're only a phone call away from Commodore support. Having a modem is the next-best thing to having LOADSTAR arrive in your mailbox everyday - even on Sundays and Holidays! :-)"

Gaelyne is a woman of extremes. Her name is extremely difficult to spell because I keep tending to spell it phonetically. Her web page is also extreme in that it's difficult to leave. There is so much information and warmth there that I found myself smiling often. Plenty of people with their own web pages feel that a mere curse word here and there is enough to get across that they are somehow fun-loving and carefree. Gaelyne takes the high road and introduces herself and the C--64/128 to you. If you surf the web, I highly recommend visiting her page.

Mirror USA site:
www.msen.com/~brain/guest/Gaelyne_Moranec

Gaelyne also says: I'm postponing The Internet for Commodore Users until I'm back in the US and can do the research required to include info about using Genie and CompuServe (I already have Delphi information). I feel the book would be incomplete without this, and want to ensure that these places receive equal coverage.

Using your C64/128 on the Internet

Since the first week my homepage became 'live' on the World Wide Web, I've received heaps of Email from people who are using other platform computers that want to know how they can use their Commodore's to access the Internet or how to move files between their PC (or MAC, or Amiga) to or from their C=64 or C=128. Others have wanted to know where they could find more Commodore support with their modems. This page can't possibly answer _all_ the questions, but hopefully it will give you a quick overview and point you toward other sources of info and the programs you may need.

Some of this is in Question and Answer form - it's a fictionalized and sample of questions I've had in my Email.

Hi! I haven't the vaguest idea how to get going on my Commodore 64 that I bought at a rummage sale. Where can I look to find programs/information/ways to hook up?

The info you need can be obtained in a couple of places. The "Internet" method of obtaining the information would be to get the FAQ (which means "Frequently Asked Questions") file from the comp.sys.cbm newsgroup. You can access this from the World Wide Web: www.msen.com/~brain/faqhome.html, or you can have it sent to you via Email by sending an Email message to Jim Brain's Mailserver, which always has the latest copy of the FAQ files. The subject of the message should be: MAILSERV (all caps) and in the body of the message, type:

send cbm-main-faq.3.0.p1
send cbm-main-faq.3.0.p2
send cbm-main-faq.3.0.p3
send cbm-main-faq.3.0.p4

You can also sign up on a Mailing List so that the latest FAQ files are sent to you via Email. Send a message to the same address above (brain@mail.msen.com), with the subject of MAILSERV. In the body of your message type:

subscribe cbm-main-faq Firstname Lastname
quit

Be sure to type your first and last names in the appropriate places. The comp.sys.cbm FAQ files can answer some of your specific questions about using your C64 or 128 to connect to the outside world.

COMMODORE 64 PUBLIC DOMAIN
Support for the Commodore 8-bits since 1987
Affordable
2000+ Disks
64/128
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The Best that PD/Shareware has to offer, including:
Games, Home Business, Utilities, Graphics, Printshop, Education, Foreign Languages, Sports, Music, Demos and More.....
Send .32 Stamp for Complete Catalog or $2.00* for Catalog & Sample Disk of 30 programs (*refundable with 1st order!)
64 DISK CONNECTION
4291 Holland Rd., Suite 562- L • Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Pig Dies In LS Scandal

Dateline: Shreveport. On March 12, 1996 LOADSTAR editor Fender Tucker received a letter from Robert "Eric" Severns of Dobbins CA asking for an autographed picture of a young lady who appeared in an ad for a LOADSTAR T-shirt. He said the ad picture itself would be okay if her "father" were cropped out of it. Since the two individuals in the ad were Tucker and his wife, Judi, he refused to allow the autograph and, in an editorial, mentioned something about sending a poisoned disk to certain wiseacres.

Then, on May 1, 1996, Tucker received the following letter from Severns:

Dear Moe,

(Please forgive such gross familiarity, but it is with great haste that I must deliver my apologies. I beg your Grandness to ignore my breach of protocol.)

First, I am truly sorry about your cat, or hopefully, your neighbor's cat. Your autograph denial hit me at just the wrong time, on a particularly bad hair day, and I momentarily "lost it". Unfortunately, during that moment some orders were issued. By the time I regained normal coolness, my people had acted and the deed was done. For what it's worth, the feline's demise was quick, painless, and honorable.

Secondly, and MOST importantly, had I but known the T-shirt models were "newlyweds", I would have never asked for either's autograph. It is the truth, O Exalted One!

I swear I knew not of your marital history until just now reviewing LOADSTAR #94, which you recently posted to me in connection with the LETTERSLIDE Contest. Wow! No wonder you were so cautious about randomly dispensing your wife's signature. How lucky you were to reside in Louisiana. Out here, on the left coast, you would have found the laws a tad more restrictive as to your ability to marry such a young and innocent CHILD.

What's done is done. None of my business anyway. Best wishes to you both.

Robert "Eric" Severns

Upon receiving this letter, Tucker was at first bemused, then chagrined, and finally apoplectic. Someone had put out a hit on Guyito, his cat!

But no, the cat was still alive. (See photo.) A day later, Tucker found out that his neighbor's pig, who went by the name of Babe, had been honorably dispatched. When asked for a comment, Tucker responded: "All is forgiven. I sent Eric an autographed picture of Judi, who is 18 or older. That damn pig has stopped its nocturnal squealing, and I haven't had a bad hair day in decades. Now leave me alone. Judi says we're having pork chops tonight."

This reporter is pretty sure the story is not over. Stay tuned.

Underground Makes Changes.

As of the March/April 1996 issue, our format has expanded from the small size of 8 1/2 x 6 1/2" page to a full 8 1/2 x 11" page. Each issue will regularly run 20 of these larger pages, which would be equivalent to 40 of the smaller size. Due to the larger size, more pages, and new source of reproduction, prices have risen slightly. Effective May 1, a U.S. Subscription will be $13 for six issues per year, with sample issues for $2.50. For Canada and Mexico the new price is $15.75 per year, samples being $2.75. Subscriptions for International readers is $22.25. Prices for back issues will remain the same. All checks or money orders should be in U.S. Funds. *The Underground, 4574 Via Santa Maria, Santa Maria CA 93455.* underground@tcf.com

6502/SID Amiga Chips Recognized"

Recently Byte recognized the top 20 chips which "had a significant influence on the evolution of personal computing," in the top 20 were chips such as the Intel 4004: In 1971, Busicom, a Japanese company, wanted a chip for a new calculator. With incredible overkill, Intel built the world's first general-purpose microprocessor. Then it bought back the rights for $60,000. The Intel 4004 which ran at the blazing speed of 108 kHz. The Intel 8080: "If you drive, your life probably depends on this chip, widely used as a traffic-light controller. MOS Technology 6502: Used in devices from Nintendos to BMWs. At $25 (compared with $375 for a comparable Motorola part), the 6502 was a steal. Steve Wozniak and Commodore chose it for their early computers.

They said of the Amiga's Agnes/Denise/Paula chips: "It's not a rock group: This was the advanced chip set that powered the world's first multimedia computer: the Commodore Amiga 1000. In 1985, these three chips could do tricks that today's PCs and Macs still can't do--such as display multiple screens with independent pixel resolutions and bit depths on a single monitor."

They said this about the SID: "You can get remarkable results when you tell an engineer to do what he thinks is right. Take SID (Sound Interface Device), for example. In 1981, Bob Yannes was told to design a low-cost sound chip for the upcoming Commodore 64. He would end up creating an analog synthesizer chip that redefined the concept of sound in personal computers."

tire documents when all you wanted was a capital I.

BIOS - Legal term for the method used by IBM to settle out of court with it's competitors over copyright problems.

BOOTING - Arcane term for the aching delay as the PC dutifully checks that it's got all it's bits and pieces.

COMMAND DRIVEN - Term used to describe the way a data management package works. You tell it to do one thing, and it does another.

CONCURRENCY - The facility to handle several tasks at one, without doing any of them properly.

DEBUGGER - The person who sold us our system.

DOS - Do it Our-Selves.

DUMB TERMINAL - Exactly what it says. See 3274 CONTROLLER.

ENTROPY - The universal process of things changing for the worse. See UPGRADE.

FOURTH GENERATION - Technology that would have been appreciated in 1905.

PAPER FEED - Standard, chewy diet of dot matrix printers.

COMMS PORT - Russian submarine base.

COMMUNICATIONS - Method of combining incompatible software working to incompatible standards to produce difficult to understand results.

COMPATIBLE PRICE CUTS - Example of largesse on the part of manufacturers of PC_compatible microcomputers. Nothing to do with IBM price cuts. See IBM PRICE CUTS.

DAISYWHEEL PRINTER - Slow, letter-quality output device designed to seriously impair the hearing of the people who work near it.

DATA PROCESSING DEPARTMENT - Part of a large company designed to discourage the use of PC's.

EASILY EXPANDABLE - Minimum price configuration is unsuitable for practical use.

EASY TO INSTALL - Difficult to install, but instruction manual has pictures.

EASY TO USE - Not very powerful. See FLEXIBLE.

ELECTRONIC MAIL - Method of sending messages between PC users, rather than letting them talk to each other.

ERGONOMICALLY DESIGNED - Has highly unusual appearance.

EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS - The only branch of a US software company not to employ any knowledgeable product support staff.

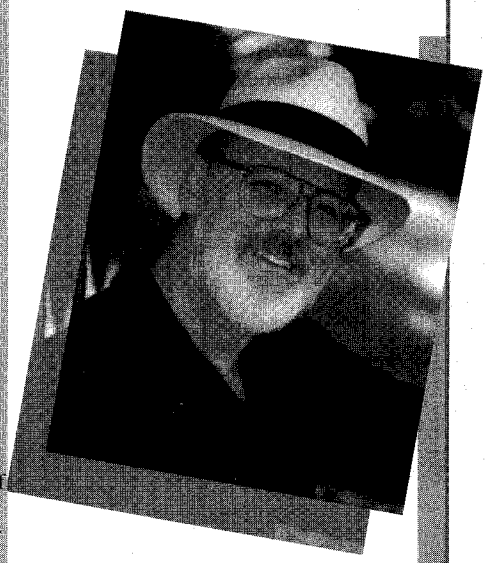
EXPANSION SLOTS - Sparse resource quickly used up by clock/calenders, games adaptors and mouse cards.

FIXED DISK DRIVE - Difficult-to-back-up storage device sold by IBM to make it easy for PC users to lose large amounts of valuable data.

FLIGHT SIMULATOR - Microsoft game which mimics a light aircraft, said to be the ultimate test for PC compatibility.

FLEXIBLE - Difficult to use.

FLOPPY DISK - Long-playing record left out in the sun.
FUNCTION KEYS - Outmoded hardware devices passed over by software authors in favor of complex combinations of CONTROL KEYS and mnemonic codes.
GRAPHICS GAME - Describes matchstick men fighting upside-down pound signs.
HANDS-ON-TRAINING - Where groups of would-be users huddle round a single PC for two days, and watch someone else use it.
HIGH LEVEL OF FUNCTIONALITY - Does some of the things it's claimed to.
IBM's HIGH RESOLUTION COLOUR GRAPHICS - On the PC, black & white.
IBM COMPATIBLE - Term used to describe a microcomputer that might run some PC software
IBM PRICE CUTS - Reduction of prices so that they're only slightly more expensive than rival products. See COMPATIBLE PRICE CUTS.
INTEGRATED SOFTWARE - Package with several functions-spreadsheet, graphics, and word processing-that only comes on four floppy disks.
JUSTIFICATION - Method used in a personalised word processed letter to make it look like a word processed letter.
LETTER QUALITY MATRIX PRINTER - Output device that produces print quality that is unsuitable for real correspondance.
LOCAL AREA NETWORK - Highly complicated system that surrenders local control of personal computing to remote data processing dept.
MOUSE - Handheld controller that's even more embarrassing for status-conscious executives to use than a keyboard.
MULTIFUNCTION BOARD - Add-in card for a PC, packed with features you don't need.
MATRIX PRINTER - Output device that produces print quality that even its makers say is unsuitable for correspondence.
NEW VERSION - Software release or hardware product that does most, but not all of what the original version was supposed to do.
NEXT VERSION - Not-yet-available release of a software package that's claimed to do all of the things claimed for the original version. Often turns out to be a NEW VERSION (see above).
NUM LOCK - One of the mysteries on the PC's keyboard. Until you start typing you don't know whether it's switched on or not.
OPERATING SYSTEM - Difficult to understand piece of software which is supposed to be 'transparent' to PC users.
PORTABLE PC - No such thing.
POWERFUL US FINANCIAL PLANNING PACKAGE - Doesn't display or print out pound signs.
RAM - A goat.
RECOMMENDED FOR HARD DISK USE - A program that comes on 12 floppy disks.
SMOOTH SCROLLING - Slightly less juddery movement of text up and down the screen.



A note from Fender Tucker on the future of The LOADSTAR Letter

Dear LOADSTARite!

Here's your chance to become a charter subscriber to the brand new, All news LOADSTAR Letter! For a mere $12 a year you can start receiving Jeff Jones' Commodore newsletter every month starting in August 1996. Here are the details:

The LOADSTAR Letter #36, which will accompany LOADSTAR #146, will be the last newsletter sent to every LOADSTAR subscriber. Rising costs have forced us to make the LS Letter into a subscription only publication. It was either that, or increase the basic subscription rate for LOADSTAR, which will remain at its all-time low of $69.95 per year.

The LOADSTAR Letter will stay the same size but will now be 100% information no ads. Jeff Jones, aided by The Underground's Scott Eggleston, will pack it full of the most important, Commodore-related information available. Articles by Jeff, Scott, Jim Brain, Gaelyne Moranec and other 8bit gurus will appear regularly.

Since a minimum of around 500 subscribers is needed to make the new LS Letter profitable, we will be accepting prepayments for subscriptions in the form of a CHECK only, for $12 in U.S. funds. No credit card orders! If, by the time of the first subscription Letter, we don't have 500 subscribers, we will cancel the LS Letter and return all checks uncashed.

It pays to sign up now! If we get around 1000 subscribers, we will keep the $12 per year subscription rate. If we stay at the 500 level, we will probably have to increase the subscription rate for future subscribers. Let us hear from you! Send checks to LOADSTAR Letter, P.O. Box 30008, Shreveport LA 71130. Long may the LS Letter wave!

Yours truly,

Fender Tucker

Fender Tucker
Grand Exalted Mojo, LOADSTAR

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LOADSTAR® MONTHLY

LOADSTAR is a monthly "magazine on disk" for the Commodore 64/128. Subscribers receive two 1541 disks (or one 1581 disk) in their mailbox every month packed with news, articles and programs. These nonPD, high quality programs are written by the best homebased programmers in the field and edited by the crack *LOADSTAR* team of Fender Tucker and Jeff Jones. Subscription prices are at an all-time low of $69.95 for a 12month subscription, or $19.95 for a three-month subscription. You may also elect to subscribe "by the month," where we charge your credit card $7.95 for each issue after it's shipped. We also offer the long line of standalone products below.

Games Disk! The Compleat Jon: 11 Games! The whole gamut of gaming is covered here: artificial intelligence, role-playing, mazes, fantasy, science fiction, education and even nonviolence (which was a radical concept in its time). These eleven games are among the best ever published on LOADSTAR. Listed on the menu in chronological order, so you can see how Jon's style changed as the years rolled by. 1581 disk 0021D3 $20. 1541 disk #0038D5 $20

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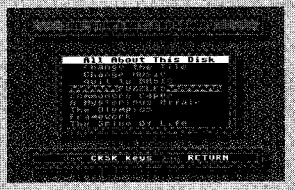

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LOADSTAR presents the biggest Geos collection of clip art and fonts ever offered at one time. All of the Geos art that's ever appeared on LOADSTAR, as well as some great files from Geos fanatic Dick Estel, are available on twenty 5.25 inch disks or eight 3.5 inch disks. Most of this has never been seen before! Use these graphics in your GeoPaint, GeoWrite and GeoPublish documents or convert to FGM with FGM utilities. Spiff up your GeoFAX documents with the appropriate graphic every time! Prices are $20 for any two 3.5 inch disks, or any five 5.25 inch disks. You can purchase the whole collection for $75 for either version.

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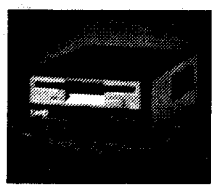

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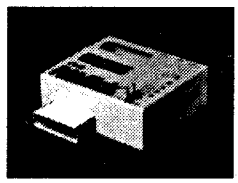

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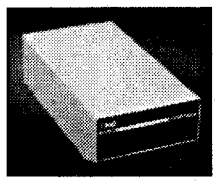

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